



5 Staffing Solutions For The Ever-Changing Economy

Work dynamics are changing

[Lawrence Chester](#) CFO Simplified

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Unemployment numbers are dropping, and jobs are looking for people. The Great Resignation has happened. People are still trying to figure out if they want to go back to work. Family finances have shifted, while people juggle and reconfigure income streams and job opportunities. The choice between working from home or at the office is an ongoing challenge for many workers and companies, and the repercussions have reverberated through the corporate community.

Your company has work that you need to get done so that you can deliver products or services to your clients. You are searching for qualified staff at a reasonable price, and you're not having the success that you once did. Plus, the work conditions or compensation they're insisting on is dramatically different than in the past. You need to adjust.

It's Time for a New Way

Now, you either need to find some new approaches to getting work done in your company or accept the fact that your sales growth or profitability is not going to meet the goals that you had set for this year and next. But the work dynamic has always been changing—now it is just more challenging.

In order to meet the demands of your business, you need to explore in detail these five approaches to the staffing problems of today:

1. Automation

Whether your computers are in-house, or in the cloud, you can automate many of your day-to-day operations. Some of these might require specialized programming, others would use an outside service. For instance, some outsourced services provide accounts payable processing or accounts receivable processing for companies.

You pay a monthly fee that is much less expensive than hiring someone, and you don't need to worry about someone getting sick or taking a vacation. Or, if you are receiving orders electronically, for instance, you can automate order processing, save time producing picking tickets, consolidate work orders, or finalize the processing of orders by having your computer programmed to do these tasks rather than being done by humans.

2. Cross training

One issue that every company faces is what happens when someone goes on vacation or gets sick? The same situation presents itself when you're short on staff or you can't find people to fill a position. It still needs to get done. You need to make sure that there are at least two people in your company that can do every critical operation in your company. Whether we're talking about the production floor or doing work in the front office, it doesn't matter. Whether it's issuing a payment to a supplier, issuing a purchase order, running payroll, picking stock for shipment, or receiving incoming inventory, don't leave yourself dependent on just one person who knows how to do it.

Cross-training may not be a long-term fix, but even for a few months, it can make the difference between operating or being hobbled.

3. Fractional services

Every company has hired someone from outside to do work for them. If you've called a plumber to do work on your company's restrooms, you hired a fractional plumber. Hiring a fractional executive is the same type of thing. You don't need him/her full time—maybe only 1 or 2 days a month.

But you need a skill level that only an experienced person can provide. Companies hire outsourced artists, photographers, or engineering consultants, why not hire an outsourced/fractional chief financial officer, human resources executive, chief marketing officer, or vice president of sales?

The same can be true for middle management needs. Fill your missing staff positions with someone that has the requisite skills, but isn't looking for or needing full-time work. That will get your work done at a lower cost than a full-time employee, and may work just as well.

4. Job sharing

This is not as frequently used, but job sharing can provide you with the ability to put two people on a particular job, sharing the responsibilities and activities of a 40-hour week. This creates opportunities for people who don't have full-time availability, either because of family commitments, travel restrictions, or health reasons, to fill a need in your company, by splitting

that 40-hour week between two individuals. And it doesn't need to be a 50/50 split.

You could have one person working three days a week and the other working two days a week. This could require some coordination of schedules and activities, but if you can't find one full-time person, two half-time people can get the job done just as well, and they might be more readily available in this environment.

5. Uptraining

Did I just make that up? Take someone that has fundamental knowledge in a functional area and give them some specific additional education to fill a needed responsibility. They may not be fully capable of doing the rest of the tasks in that particular area, but you can certainly give them additional, specific training to provide a unique needed function for your company.

That additional training might also uncover a diamond in the rough, providing some additional impetus for that employee to reach further than you thought they would be able to.

Be Creative and Flexible

Not all of these solutions would work for every situation, but when finding people to fill a role, a company needs to be flexible, and try new ways of enticing people to come to work or use existing staff in new ways. Employees are very often open to new challenges and opportunities. The ways you show your appreciation for the extra effort don't always need to be cash in an envelope.

Theater or concert tickets, restaurant gift cards, additional time-off, promotion possibilities, and other thoughtful gifts are all good ways of showing your employees that you appreciate their efforts to keep the company growing forward. And, improved employee engagement is the long-term, unexpected benefit you may receive.

Author Bio



Lawrence Chester is President of [CFO Simplified](#). He has served as a CFO for 25 years for companies, including Colovos Company, Republic Windows and Doors, United Service Companies, and High Sierra Sport Company. Realizing that he enjoyed the challenges of helping companies that were working their way through a crisis, he joined a bankruptcy trustee for several years, analyzing the financial condition of client companies, and managing them through those difficult times. Soon after that, he struck out on his own, forming CFO Simplified's team of CFOs.

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